

An artistic illustration of a dental arch against a black background. Two grey, threaded dental implants are positioned on either side of a central gap. The implants have a textured, cylindrical upper portion and a tapered lower portion. Below the implants, a pink, fleshy-looking structure represents the gum tissue. At the bottom, a row of white, stylized teeth is visible, with the central gap corresponding to the missing teeth.

SECOND EDITION

# **FULL-ARCH IMPLANT REHABILITATION**

ARUN K. GARG, DMD



FULL-ARCH IMPLANT REHABILITATION  
SECOND EDITION



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Library of Congress Control Number: 2025944354

A CIP record for this book is available from the British Library.  
ISBN: 978-1-64724-198-8



© 2026 Quintessence Publishing Co, Inc

Quintessence Publishing Co, Inc  
411 N Raddant Road  
Batavia, IL 60510  
[www.quintessence-publishing.com](http://www.quintessence-publishing.com)

5 4 3 2 1

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Editor: Leah Huffman  
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Printed in Croatia



# FULL-ARCH IMPLANT REHABILITATION

SECOND EDITION

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 **QUINTESSENCE PUBLISHING**

Berlin | Chicago | Tokyo  
Barcelona | London | Milan | Paris | Prague | Seoul | Warsaw  
*Beijing | Istanbul | Sao Paulo | Sydney | Zagreb*



## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

**W**hen the first edition of *Full-Arch Implant Rehabilitation* was released, my goal was simple: to provide a clear, practical, and comprehensive roadmap for clinicians who wanted to elevate their practice with predictable full-arch solutions. The overwhelming response from colleagues worldwide confirmed what I had long believed—that full-arch implant rehabilitation (FAIR) represents not only the most rewarding area of implant dentistry but also one of the most transformative treatments we can offer patients.

Since that first publication, the science, technology, and clinical workflows surrounding the All-on-X concept have continued to evolve rapidly. Digital dentistry has moved from being a luxury to becoming an expectation. Advances in planning software, guided surgery, restorative materials, and laboratory protocols have reshaped how we deliver treatment. At the same time, patient demand for immediate, life-changing results has never been greater.

This second edition reflects that evolution. Every chapter has been carefully updated, expanded, and refined to incorporate the latest evidence, digital protocols, and clinical pearls from my decades of teaching and

practice. New sections address the nuances of digital scanning, virtual treatment planning, prosthetic materials, and the integration of platelet-rich plasma (PRP)/platelet-rich fibrin (PRF) and biologics to enhance surgical outcomes. Throughout, the emphasis remains the same: providing practical, step-by-step strategies that clinicians can implement immediately in their practices.

The book is also deeply personal. Over two decades of teaching tens of thousands of dentists around the world, I have witnessed how mastery of full-arch rehabilitation transforms not only dental practices but entire lives—restoring patients' confidence through their smiles and reigniting clinicians' passion and growth in their careers.

I am profoundly grateful to the countless colleagues, students, and patients who have taught me, challenged me, and inspired me along the way. I am equally grateful to Quintessence Publishing for their continued commitment to advancing dental education at the highest level.

It is my hope that this second edition will serve not only as a technical guide but also as a source of inspiration—reminding clinicians that when we restore a full arch, we are restoring not just teeth but also dignity, confidence, and quality of life.



# CONTENTS

1. Addressing Patient-Perceived Barriers to Full-Arch Rehabilitation 1
2. Evolution of the FAIR Protocol 5
3. History of Tilted Implants with an Immediate Prosthesis 13
4. Identifying and Evaluating Candidates 19
5. The FAIR Technique and Its Modifications 30
6. Treating the Fully Edentulous Mandible 40
7. Treating the Fully Edentulous Maxilla 57
8. Treating the Partially Edentulous Mandible 78
9. Treating the Partially Edentulous Maxilla 94
10. FAIR Prosthetic Protocols 106
11. Potential Complications 116
12. Role of CBCT in the FAIR Protocol 123
13. The FAIR Digital Workflow 127
14. Integrating Photogrammetry into the FAIR Protocol 145
15. Integrating Facial Scanning and Digital Workflows into the FAIR Protocol 153  
*John Heimke and Arun K. Garg*
16. Marketing Your Full-Arch Therapy Practice 163  
*Greg Essenmacher and Arun K. Garg*
- Index 175

# ADDRESSING PATIENT-PERCEIVED BARRIERS TO FULL-ARCH REHABILITATION

**F**ull-arch implant rehabilitation (FAIR) is one of the many recent innovations in implant therapy designed to resolve the functional and esthetic problems of the millions of edentulous and nearly edentulous patients worldwide. This chapter provides guidelines for educating patients and showing them how FAIR can meet their dental needs. While this book focuses primarily on the physiologic aspects of dental restoration, it is also important to consider patient acceptance. Clinicians must understand that lack of knowledge is a significant barrier to patient acceptance of FAIR—and work to overcome it. Treatment success depends on the dentist's ability to first manage any psychosocial circumstances that might keep the patient from choosing the best rehabilitation procedure offered.

The rest of this book describes how the FAIR protocol works, who it should be used for, and methods for successfully implementing it in different patients. Several chapters describe step-by-step treatments with detailed clinical photographs documenting every stage, from initial assessment to prosthesis delivery. This introductory chapter equips dentists to confidently manage any patient-perceived barriers to dental rehabilitation, including anxieties concerning finances, esthetic/

functional outcomes, and the perceived complexities of FAIR clinical procedures.

## Patients and Edentulism

Tooth decay and periodontal disease are the most common causes of tooth loss. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “adequate personal, professional, and population-based preventive practices, and advancements in dental treatment have helped ensure tooth retention throughout life.”<sup>1</sup> Yet despite CDC data showing that edentulism rates for older adults have declined over the last several decades, a large segment of the aging population in the US and the world will still suffer from partial or complete edentulism within the next decade. While it is true that tooth loss is less prevalent today due to the continuity of professional and personal dental care over a person's lifetime, aging populations worldwide continue to increase the number of older adults prone to experiencing edentulism.<sup>2-4</sup> Furthermore, partial and complete edentulism can develop due to a variety of reasons, even when dental practitioners have provided conscientious care and their patients follow proper dental hygiene routines. In cases of inadequate professional care and/or poor patient hygiene, the incidence of edentulism can soar.<sup>5,6</sup>

Dental professionals must be ready to restore the dental function (chewing and speech) of edentulous patients and improve their quality of life with restored esthetics—giving them back a confident smile and laugh. Furthermore, these goals must be achieved with a minimal number of procedures at an affordable cost, without sacrificing the quality or longevity of treatment.



**Fig 1-1** Tilting the posterior implants (and possibly the anterior implants as well) is key for obtaining adequate implant anchorage in a bone-deficient arch.

Fortunately, patients can choose from a range of care options for both preventing and managing edentulism. Dentists must be well-informed about the breadth of restorative options available as well as the many obstacles patients face in choosing one of those options. Clinicians must be knowledgeable about not only the various physiologic treatment options but also the psychosocial circumstances that can prevent patients from embracing certain options.<sup>7-12</sup>

## Introducing FAIR

FAIR is just one of several modern dental protocols that have been developed to immediately restore both the esthetic and functional aspects of the dentition in one or both arches, even in the highly atrophic mandible and maxilla.<sup>13-16</sup> It offers patients full-arch prostheses that are immediate, fixed, loaded, esthetically pleasing, highly functional, inexpensive, maintainable, and reliable. The low-morbidity surgical and provisional restoration techniques performed as part of FAIR are done in a single visit. Usually only four or five implants are placed, including posterior tilted implants that take full advantage of the available bone and often eliminate the need for bone grafting (Fig 1-1). Generally, the total rehabilitation takes only a few hours of restorative/prosthetic procedures and provides the patient with esthetics and function far superior to that offered by traditional dentures. FAIR also has the capacity to halt and even reverse alveolar bone deterioration via

implant-stimulated bone growth within the jaw, similar to that induced by natural tooth roots.<sup>17,18</sup> Subsequent chapters describe the specific methods for choosing and treating patients with FAIR to restore full-arch function and esthetics.

## Psychosocial Barriers to FAIR Treatment

### FINANCES

As noted by the CDC, despite the well-documented reduction in tooth loss in the US, several segments of the population show a persistent susceptibility to single and multiple tooth loss. Tooth loss is associated with three major factors: lack of education, low income, and smoking.<sup>1</sup> Of course, edentulism is also more common among older Americans. A 2010 study indicated that 16.9% of US adults 65 years and older and 14.2% of adults aged 65 to 74 years were edentulous.<sup>1</sup> Though many potential FAIR candidates have health or dental insurance that covers a portion of dental implant rehabilitation, the patient typically still assumes the major share of the financial burden of these elective dental procedures, which may prevent them from receiving care.

It is not only those with moderate or low income who struggle with dental challenges. A significant percentage of patients with six-figure incomes also experience tooth loss, and many relatively prosperous members of the baby boom generation who have reached retirement age also require full- or partial-arch rehabilitation.<sup>19,20</sup>





**Fig 1-2** In descending order of importance, the following facial components are predictive factors for the esthetic appearance of the smiling male face: mouth, eyes, chin region, and nose.<sup>25</sup> These results suggest that for many people, an improvement in smile esthetics is likely to have extended positive effects on perceived facial attractiveness compared with other procedures (eg, rhinoplasty).

The perceived association of edentulism with lower socioeconomic status may itself make patients who could otherwise afford dental care reluctant to pay for dental restoration if the cost is perceived as prohibitive.<sup>21</sup> Clinicians should also not assume that their wealthier patients are not cost-conscious, especially after those patients have already retired.

#### ESTHETIC AND FUNCTIONAL OUTCOMES

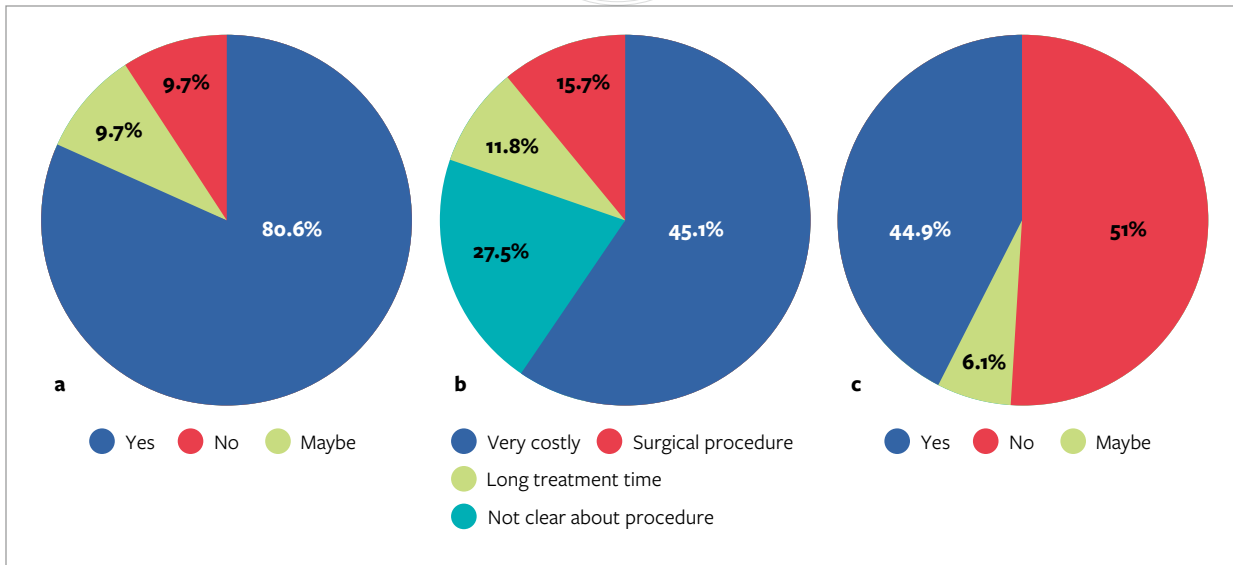
In addition to financial considerations, patient perceptions regarding esthetic and functional outcomes may also contribute to reluctance to commit to treatment.<sup>22</sup> Patients view good dental care as directly resulting in improved dental function and overall health. In addition to believing that proper dental care can improve overall health, patients generally believe that when the dental procedure is complete, they will be satisfied with both the functional and esthetic outcomes.<sup>12</sup> Patients rank the importance of orofacial appearance (for example, an attractive smile and laugh) on par with pain and function when it comes to making decisions about whether to accept dental care.<sup>23</sup> Don't underestimate the value of esthetics in patient perceptions concerning dental care, particularly for procedures in the esthetic zone. Patients

usually recognize the critical role that their smile and eyes play in social life.<sup>24-26</sup>

The perception of what is esthetic varies from patient to patient. In an effort to objectively quantify the results of esthetic zone procedures, researchers have used both intraoral and extraoral criteria, including general facial esthetics and the measurement of soft tissues, the smile/lip line, and incisor size and position.<sup>24</sup> Researchers have also attempted to determine the relative importance of individual facial features (for example, the chin, nose, and eyes) within the overall facial appearance of patients. The mouth and eyes are consistently rated as high predictors of broad esthetic appeal (Fig 1-2). Restorative dentists should consider the implications of these studies when collaborating with medical professionals specializing in other areas of facial restoration and esthetics.<sup>25</sup>

#### PATIENT PERCEPTION OF TREATMENT COMPLEXITIES

Many candidates for FAIR procedures believe that FAIR and similar protocols are overly complex. This view is based on the perception that smile-related esthetics and masticatory/speaking problems are relatively



**Fig 1-3** The results of a cross-sectional survey of 100 dental patients revealed that 20% of them were either unaware of or unsure regarding implant therapy as a viable treatment option for the replacement of missing teeth. Only 45% expressed a positive attitude toward implant therapy and willingness to accept the treatment if needed.<sup>29</sup> The graphs show how patients responded to the following questions: (a) Are you aware of implant therapy as a treatment option for missing teeth? (b) What is your reason for not opting for implant therapy (if needed)? (c) Are you willing to receive more information about implant therapy?

simple to correct via traditional, less complicated, and less costly means—especially with conventional dental appliances like complete dentures.<sup>27</sup> As a result, only a relatively small percentage of patients take advantage of the quality-of-life improvements offered by FAIR. A lack of patient knowledge about the detrimental aspects of prolonged conventional denture wear is perhaps the most crucial patient perception to correct. Patients must be shown how traditional dentures can compound esthetic and mastication problems and contribute to biologic degradation of the arches.

Patients also perceive several specific drawbacks to implant rehabilitation, including the need for more than one surgical procedure (resulting in increased cost, prolonged pain, and added inconvenience) and the required healing time (primarily because of its adverse effects on eating). However, these same patients also acknowledge the significant advantages to dental and general health and improved quality of life that implant rehabilitation provides.<sup>28</sup>

Generally, fear and pain rank high as deterrents to dental treatment, with dental procedure fears being higher among women than men. Patients mostly fear needle injections, tooth drilling, and dental surgery

based on the pain they associate with these procedures. Good pain management and a careful explanation of procedures can help prepare patients to undergo the necessary steps of rehabilitation. Patients may be reassured to know that the quality of recovery is not affected much by whether one implant or several are placed, so fears about increased pain and inconvenience when more implants are placed are generally unwarranted.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, many patients simply do not realize that they are qualified candidates for FAIR procedures (Fig 1-3). Misconceptions about FAIR can be dispelled by familiarizing patients with recent trends in dental implant use, particularly in the US, including advances in digitally enhanced dentistry and bone regeneration procedures.<sup>19,29,30</sup>

## Conclusion

The FAIR protocol is one of the newest implant therapy innovations designed to treat one or both arches of edentulous or nearly edentulous patients. The prosthesis is immediate, fixed, esthetically pleasing, highly functional, inexpensive, and maintainable, and the procedure can often be performed without the need for bone grafting.

# INDEX



Page numbers followed by “t” denote tables; “f” denote figures; and “b” denote boxes.

## A

**Abutments**  
 angled, 46f, 66f, 85f, 100f  
 cuff height of, 46, 66, 100  
 custom, 7f  
 in fully edentulous mandible, 44–47, 46f  
 healing, 148  
 multiunit, 14f, 33, 36f–37f, 47, 51f, 66, 85f, 108, 160f  
 in partially edentulous mandible, 83–86, 85f–86f  
 straight, 66, 83  
 tilted, 16  
**Acrylic teeth**, 113  
**Additive manufacturing**, 158  
**ALARA**, 126  
**Alveolar ridge reduction**, 97, 98f  
**Anchorage**, of implants, 14–15  
**Anesthesia**, 42  
**Angled abutments**, 46f, 66f, 85f, 100f  
**Angled implants**, in edentulous maxilla, 15  
**Apertures**, 36  
**Artificial intelligence**, 143  
**Augmented reality**, 143  
**Avatar patient**, 154f, 154–155  
**Axial implants**, 10, 10f, 31f

## B

**Balanced articulation**, 15  
**Bite registration**, 28, 33, 33f, 36, 51f, 71f  
**Bone augmentation**, 35  
**Bone contouring**, 34  
**Bone density**, 25–28  
**Bone expanders**, 63, 63f, 97  
**Bone flaring**, 47, 81  
**Bone grafting**, 5  
**Bone loss**, 116, 117f  
**Bone reduction guide**, 141f  
**Bone resorption**, 25–28, 26f–27f  
**Bone volume**, 25–28, 26f–27f  
**Branding of practice**, 166–167  
**Bupivacaine**, 42, 59, 97  
**Burs**  
     Lindemann bone, 61, 62f  
     ridge-contouring, 34, 35f

## C

**Candidates**  
 age range of, 19

classification of, 23, 24f  
 complaints of, 20–21  
 concerns of, 20  
 dental history of, 21, 22f–23f  
 denture history of, 20–21  
 deterring of, 40  
 evaluation of, 20t, 20–23  
 examinations of, 22  
 expectations of, 20–21  
 extraoral examination of, 22  
 intraoral examination of, 22  
 overview of, 19–20  
 radiographic analysis of, 22–23  
**Cantilever length**, 13, 13f, 106f  
**Case classification**, 23, 24f  
**Case selection**, 165  
**CBCT**  
     anatomy assessments using, 123, 124f–125f  
     artifacts associated with, 126  
     bone tissue evaluations using, 123, 124f–125f, 157  
     description of, 129, 154  
     indications for, 123  
     limitations of, 126  
     surgical guides fabricated using, 124–126  
     treatment planning for, 123–126  
**Clinical coordinator**, 172  
**Closed-tray technique**, for impressions, 110  
**Complications**  
     bone loss, 116, 117f  
     definitive prosthesis, 119–120, 119f–120f  
     esthetic, 117f, 117–118  
     fractures, 119–120  
     hygiene-related, 118  
     infection, 117  
     patient-related, 118, 118f  
     prosthesis-related, 118–121  
     provisional prosthesis, 118–119  
     surgical, 116–117, 117f  
     wear-related, 120  
**Coronal flaring**, 63

## D

**D1 bone**, 14  
**D2 bone**, 14  
**Definitive prosthesis**  
     adjustments to, 114  
     complications of, 119–120, 119f–120f  
     digital milling of, 159  
     fabrication and delivery of  
         description of, 112–113, 130, 160, 161f  
     framework, 112–113  
         for fully edentulous maxilla, 68, 68f–69f  
         for partially edentulous maxilla, 101

wax try-in, 112  
 final impressions for, 110–112  
 fracture of, 119–120  
 interarch space for, 119  
 nonpassive fit of, 121f  
 passive fit of, 113–114, 120  
 preliminary impressions for, 110–112  
 seating of, 113, 114  
 teeth in, 113  
**Delayed loading of implants**, 13  
**Dental history**, 21, 22f–23f  
**Dental laboratory**, 165, 165b  
**Dental service organization**, 166  
**Dentist**, 164–165  
**Denture**  
     buccal flange of, 58, 58f  
     conventional, 9f  
     duplicate template, 107  
     fixed prosthesis from, 36  
     immediate, 33, 33f, 107–108  
     implant-supported prosthesis conversion of, 107–108  
     intaglio surface of, 107f  
     quality of life affected by, 5  
     removable. See Removable denture.  
**Denture history**, 20–21  
**Digital intraoral scanning**, 127  
**Digital records**, 158f, 159  
**Digital technology**  
     benefits of, 127–128  
     limitations of, 128  
     trends in, 143–144  
**Digital workflow**  
     advantages of, 144, 162  
     benefits of, 127–128, 129b  
     clinical impact of, 162  
     digital data acquisition, 128–129  
     follow-up, 130–131  
     implant surgery, 130  
     intraoral scanners, 156, 156f  
     limitations of, 128, 129b  
     mandibular application of, 131, 137f–143f  
     maxillary application of, 131, 131f–137f  
     postoperative care, 130–131  
     prosthetic rehabilitation, 130  
     steps involved in, 128–131, 130f–143f, 158f–161f, 159–160  
     treatment planning, 128–129, 159  
**Direction indicators**, 46, 46f, 65, 66f, 100f  
**Direct-to-consumer marketing**, 172  
**Distal tilted implants**, 44  
**DSO**. See Dental service organization.  
**DTC marketing**. See Direct-to-consumer marketing.  
**Dynamic navigation**, 125



## E

Edentulism  
 causes of, vi  
 dental function restoration in, vi  
 full. See Fully edentulous mandible; Fully edentulous maxilla.  
 mandibular. See Fully edentulous mandible; Partially edentulous mandible.  
 maxillary. See Fully edentulous maxilla; Partially edentulous maxilla.  
 in older adults, 1  
 partial. See Partially edentulous mandible; Partially edentulous maxilla.  
 Empathy, 168  
 Esthetic complications, 117f, 117–118  
 Esthetics  
 in candidate selection, 21  
 facial features in, 2, 2f  
 patient perceptions regarding, 2  
 Extraoral examination, 22

## F

Facial scanning, 153, 156f, 157  
 FAIR practice  
 branding of, 166–167  
 dedicated phone line, 168  
 empathy, 168  
 information sharing, 168–169  
 marketing of, 172–174, 174b  
 patient experience touchpoints for, 167–168, 168b  
 referrals, 173–174  
 roadmap to success for, 164  
 staffing of, 169–172  
 terminology use in, 169  
 tracking of, 173  
 FAIR protocol  
 advantages of, 5, 6t, 20, 30, 40, 57  
 candidates for, 3, 3f. See also Candidates.  
 complexities of, patient perception of, 2–3  
 complications of. See Complications.  
 costs of, 163  
 description of, vi, 1, 5  
 disadvantages of, 9  
 drawbacks to, 3, 6t  
 esthetic outcomes of, 2  
 evolution of, 5–10, 6t, 7f–10f  
 financial barriers to, 1–2  
 functional outcomes of, 2  
 functionality provided by, 9, 9f  
 mandibular, 7f

motivation for learning, 163  
 principles of, 30b  
 psychosocial barriers to, 1–3  
 revenue from, 163  
 surgery in, 33–35, 34f  
 surgical guidelines, 30  
 tilted implants and. See Tilted implants.  
 FDDBA. See Freeze-dried bone allograft.  
 Fear, 3  
 Fixed prosthesis, denture converted into, 36  
 Fixed prosthodontics, improvements in, 5  
 4D printing, 143  
 Framework, for definitive prosthesis, 113  
 Freeze-dried bone allograft, 78–79, 79f, 85f, 91f  
 Full-arch implant placement, maxillary, 7f–8f  
 Full-arch implant rehabilitation. See FAIR protocol.  
 Fully edentulous mandible  
 denture duplicate template for, 40–41, 41f  
 description of, 40  
 digital workflow application to, 140f–141f  
 guided surgery in, 50f–55f  
 models of, 41  
 preoperative procedure for, 40–41  
 surgical procedure for  
 abutment attachment, 44–47, 46f  
 anesthesia, 42  
 anterior implants, 43–44, 45f  
 flap reflection, 42–43  
 implant placement, 43–44  
 incision design, 42–43, 43f, 50f  
 overview of, 41–42  
 prosthesis placement and attachment, 48, 48f–49f  
 soft tissue measurements, 47  
 tilted implants, 43f, 44  
 tissue reflection, 42–43  
 treatment planning for, 40  
 Fully edentulous maxilla  
 bone augmentation for, 57  
 preoperative procedure for, 57–58  
 surgical procedure for  
 abutment attachment, 66–67  
 anesthesia, 59  
 case study of, 70f–75f  
 definitive prosthesis fabrication and delivery, 68, 68f–69f  
 denture conversion, 67  
 immediate dentures, 58, 59f  
 implant placement, 61–66, 62f–65f  
 incision design, 59f, 59–61  
 osteotomy, 61  
 overview of, 58–59  
 palatal flap, 60, 60f

preparation in, 58  
 provisional prosthesis, 75f  
 straight implants, 65  
 tilted implants, 64f, 64–65  
 time requirements, 58–59  
 tissue reflection, 59–61, 60f  
 timeline for, 57–58

## G

GI-MASK, 36, 37f, 52f–53f, 72f–73f, 107  
 Grammetry, 157f, 157–158  
 Guided surgery  
 advantages of, 125b  
 in fully edentulous mandible, 50f–55f  
 implant placement using, 130

## H

Healing abutments, 148  
 Hex driver, 47, 47f, 86f, 100  
 Hygiene, 109, 118

## I

Immediate denture  
 description of, 33, 33f  
 implant-supported prosthesis conversion of, 107–108  
 Immediate loading, 130  
 Immediate provisionalization, 35–37, 36f–38f  
 Immediately loaded implants  
 prosthesis used for, 15  
 success rates for, 5  
 Implant(s)  
 anchorage of, 14–15  
 angulation of, 14  
 axial placement of, 10, 10f  
 delayed loading of, 13  
 direction indicators for, 46, 46f, 65, 66f  
 failure of, 116  
 in mandible, 33  
 in maxilla, 32  
 mobility of, 14–15  
 osseointegration of, 109, 130  
 outcomes of, factors guiding, 14–15  
 surgical guides in placement of, 125–126  
 teeth extraction before, 149f  
 tilted. See Tilted implants.  
 virtual placement of, 125  
 Implant company, 165–166  
 Implant stability quotient, 14–15  
 Implant-supported prosthesis, 107–108  
 Impressions  
 for definitive prosthesis, 110–112  
 for provisional prosthesis, 108, 110f  
 Inferior alveolar nerve, 31

Information sharing, 168–169  
Interarch space, 59f, 119  
Intraoral examination, 22  
Intraoral scanners, 156, 156f  
Intraoral scans, 153  
ISQ. *See* Implant stability quotient.

## L

Layered data integration, 153–154, 154f  
Lead call team member, 170–171  
Life expectancy, 9  
Lindemann bone bur, 61, 62f  
Lip line, 24–25, 25f

## M

M-4 configuration, 16, 17f  
Machine learning, 143  
Mandible  
    bone resorption in, 27f  
    digital workflow application to, 131, 137f–143f  
    fully edentulous. *See* Fully edentulous mandible.  
    implant positioning in, 33  
    partially edentulous. *See* Partially edentulous mandible.  
Marcaine, 42, 59  
Marius bridge, 14  
Marketing, 172–174  
Master cast  
    final impressions for, 111, 111f  
    verification jig for, 111–112, 112f  
Maxilla  
    bone, anchorage capacity of, 8f  
    bone resorption in, 26f  
    digital workflow application to, 131, 131f–137f  
    edentulous  
        anterior implants for, 32  
        crestal bone ridge of, 30  
    fully. *See* Fully edentulous maxilla.  
    partial. *See* Partially edentulous maxilla.  
    tilted implants in restoration of, 15–16, 15f–16f, 30  
    implant positioning in, 30–31, 31f  
Mental nerve, 30  
Midcrestal incision, 60  
Mucoperiosteal flap, 31  
Multiunit abutments, 14f, 33, 36f–37f, 47, 51f, 66, 85f, 108, 160f

## N

Nasopalatine foramen, 31, 32f  
Nasopalatine nerve, 59, 59f

## O

Occlusion  
    balanced articulation in, 15  
    vertical dimension of, 33, 34f, 107, 139f  
Older adults, edentulism in, 1  
Open-tray technique, for impressions, 110  
Orofacial appearance, 2  
Osseointegration, 109, 130  
Osteotomy  
    for tilted implants, 43  
    undersizing of, 44, 61

## P

Pain, 3  
Palatal flap, 60, 60f  
Partially edentulous mandible  
    alveolar bone availability in, 79  
    autogenous blood concentrates in, 80t  
    bone augmentation in, 78  
    denture duplicate template for, 80f, 81, 82f  
    description of, 23, 24f  
    digital workflow application to, 137f  
    extraction sockets in, 78  
    illustration of, 78f  
    preoperative procedure in, 81  
    socket preservation in, 78  
    special considerations for, 79  
    surgical procedure in  
        abutment attachment, 83–86, 85f–86f, 90f  
        anterior implants, 83  
        case study of, 89f–91f  
        implant placement, 81, 83  
        incision design, 81, 82f, 89f  
        osteotomy, 90f  
        prosthesis fabrication and delivery, 86, 87f–88f  
        tilted implants, 81, 85f  
        tissue reflection, 81, 82f  
Partially edentulous maxilla  
    bone augmentation for, 94  
    computed tomography of, 95  
    description of, 23, 24f  
    extraction sockets in, 94, 104  
    illustration of, 94f  
    preoperative procedure for, 95  
    socket preservation in, 94–95  
    surgical procedure in  
        abutment attachment, 100, 100f  
        anesthesia, 96–97  
        burs used in, 97  
        case study of, 101f–104f  
        definitive prosthesis fabrication and placement, 101

denture conversion, 100–101  
denture duplicate template, 101f  
direction indicators, 100, 100f  
immediate denture, 96  
implant placement, 97–100, 99f  
incision design, 97, 98f  
osteotomy, 97  
overview of, 95–97  
threaded implants, 97  
tilted distal implants, 99–100  
tissue reflection, 97, 98f–99f  
Patient education and engagement, 144  
Peri-implantitis, 44, 83, 99, 117, 117f  
Periodontal disease, vi  
Photogrammetry  
    advantages of, 145–146  
    commercial systems, 146t  
    definition of, 145  
    description of, 157  
    FAIR application of, 146–152, 147f–151f  
    limitations of, 145–146  
    markers, 147, 147f, 150f  
    soft tissue scanning, 148–149, 149f–150f  
Photographic series, 158f  
Platelet-rich plasma, 64, 64f, 79, 80t, 91f, 99  
Polymethyl methacrylate, 15, 41, 57, 95, 135f–136f  
Posterior tilted implants  
    description of, 1, 1f  
    distal tilting of, 15f  
Primary stability, 14  
Prosthetic protocols  
    biomechanical factors, 106  
    definitive prosthesis. *See* Definitive prosthesis.  
    description of, 106  
    provisional prosthesis. *See* Provisional prosthesis.  
Prototypes, 155, 159  
Provisional prosthesis  
    CAD design of, 129  
    complications of, 118–119  
    delivery of, 108–109  
    denture conversion to implant-supported prosthesis, 107–108  
    fabrication of, 107  
    final impressions, 108  
    hygiene for, 109  
Provisionalization, immediate, 35–37, 36f–38f  
PRP. *See* Platelet-rich plasma.  
Pterygoid implants, 16

## R

Radiographic analysis, 22–23  
Referrals, 173–174  
Remote consultations, 143



Removable dentures  
 advantages of, 6t  
 disadvantages of, 6t  
 removable overdenture versus, 9f  
 Removable overdenture, 6, 9, 10f  
 Resonance frequency analysis, 15  
 Retromolar pads, 47  
 RFA. See Resonance frequency analysis.  
 Ridge-contouring burs, 34, 35f

## S

Screw loosening or fracture, 119, 119f, 121  
 Screw-retained prosthesis, 101  
 Scripts, 169–170  
 Sheffield technique, 113  
 Simple screw test, 113  
 Sinus membrane, 61, 97  
 Smile Artist Approach, 155f, 155–156  
 Smile line, 24–25, 25f, 117f  
 Staffing, 169–172  
 Stereolithographic model, 57  
 STL model. See Stereolithographic model.  
 Straight abutments, 66  
 Surgical guides  
   CBCT fabrication of, 124–126  
   description of, 33, 164  
   fabrication of, 124–126, 129–130

## T

Telemedicine, 143  
 3D avatar patient, 154f, 154–155  
 3D facial scans, 154, 156f, 157  
 3D printing, 125, 143, 158, 158f

Tilted implants  
   abutments for, 16  
   advantages of, 10, 10f, 13  
   angulation of, 14–16, 17f  
   apex of, 15  
   cantilever length of, 13, 13f  
   distal, 44, 64f  
   in edentulous maxilla, 15–16, 15f–16f, 30  
 FAIR procedures and, 14  
   in fully edentulous mandible, 43f, 44  
   in fully edentulous maxilla, 64f, 64–65  
   history of, 13–17  
   illustration of, 1f  
 M-4 configuration of, 16, 17f  
   osteotomies for, 43  
   in partially edentulous mandible, 81, 85f  
   in partially edentulous maxilla, 99–100  
   position of, 16, 17f  
   posterior, 1, 1f  
   primary stability of, 14  
   protocol for, 13  
   pterygoid implants, 16  
   tilt amount for, 35  
   types of, 15–16  
   V-4 configuration of, 16, 17f  
   zygomatic implants, 16  
 Titanium sleeves, 36–37, 36f–37f, 48f, 52f, 54f,  
   100, 140f  
 Tooth decay, vi  
 Tooth loss  
   causes of, vi  
   factors associated with, 1  
 Transition line, 25f  
 Treatment coordinator, 171–172

Treatment planning  
   bone density, 25–28  
   bone volume, 25–28, 26f–27f  
   case classification, 23, 24f  
   measurements in  
     distance to bone, 23–24  
     lip line, 24–25, 25f  
     smile line, 24–25, 25f  
   model evaluation, 28  
   questions for, 21b  
 Trough, 35, 35f

## U

Unique selling position, 166–167

## V

V-4 configuration, 16, 17f  
 Verification jig, 111–112, 112f–113f  
 Vertical dimension of occlusion, 33, 34f,  
   107, 139f  
 Virtual reality, 143

## W

Wax try-in, 33  
 Wear-related complications, 120

## Z

Zygomatic implants  
   placement of, 6, 8f  
   as tilted implants, 16





Although the benefits of implant rehabilitation are clear, only a small percentage of patients who could benefit from FAIR receive it. Dentists must be knowledgeable about the various treatment options available and understand how to present alternatives to patients. Additionally, dentists must understand and combat patient concerns and misconceptions that prevent them from undergoing the procedure. The FAIR protocol should be perceived by patients as simply another necessary step in the dental health care continuum.

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# INDEX



Page numbers followed by “t” denote tables; “f” denote figures; and “b” denote boxes.

## A

**Abutments**  
 angled, 46f, 66f, 85f, 100f  
 cuff height of, 46, 66, 100  
 custom, 7f  
 in fully edentulous mandible, 44–47, 46f  
 healing, 148  
 multiunit, 14f, 33, 36f–37f, 47, 51f, 66, 85f, 108, 160f  
 in partially edentulous mandible, 83–86, 85f–86f  
 straight, 66, 83  
 tilted, 16  
**Acrylic teeth**, 113  
**Additive manufacturing**, 158  
**ALARA**, 126  
**Alveolar ridge reduction**, 97, 98f  
**Anchorage**, of implants, 14–15  
**Anesthesia**, 42  
**Angled abutments**, 46f, 66f, 85f, 100f  
**Angled implants**, in edentulous maxilla, 15  
**Apertures**, 36  
**Artificial intelligence**, 143  
**Augmented reality**, 143  
**Avatar patient**, 154f, 154–155  
**Axial implants**, 10, 10f, 31f

## B

**Balanced articulation**, 15  
**Bite registration**, 28, 33, 33f, 36, 51f, 71f  
**Bone augmentation**, 35  
**Bone contouring**, 34  
**Bone density**, 25–28  
**Bone expanders**, 63, 63f, 97  
**Bone flaring**, 47, 81  
**Bone grafting**, 5  
**Bone loss**, 116, 117f  
**Bone reduction guide**, 141f  
**Bone resorption**, 25–28, 26f–27f  
**Bone volume**, 25–28, 26f–27f  
**Branding of practice**, 166–167  
**Bupivacaine**, 42, 59, 97  
**Burs**  
     Lindemann bone, 61, 62f  
     ridge-contouring, 34, 35f

## C

**Candidates**  
 age range of, 19

classification of, 23, 24f  
 complaints of, 20–21  
 concerns of, 20  
 dental history of, 21, 22f–23f  
 denture history of, 20–21  
 deterring of, 40  
 evaluation of, 20t, 20–23  
 examinations of, 22  
 expectations of, 20–21  
 extraoral examination of, 22  
 intraoral examination of, 22  
 overview of, 19–20  
 radiographic analysis of, 22–23  
**Cantilever length**, 13, 13f, 106f  
**Case classification**, 23, 24f  
**Case selection**, 165  
**CBCT**  
     anatomy assessments using, 123, 124f–125f  
     artifacts associated with, 126  
     bone tissue evaluations using, 123, 124f–125f, 157  
     description of, 129, 154  
     indications for, 123  
     limitations of, 126  
     surgical guides fabricated using, 124–126  
     treatment planning for, 123–126  
**Clinical coordinator**, 172  
**Closed-tray technique**, for impressions, 110  
**Complications**  
     bone loss, 116, 117f  
     definitive prosthesis, 119–120, 119f–120f  
     esthetic, 117f, 117–118  
     fractures, 119–120  
     hygiene-related, 118  
     infection, 117  
     patient-related, 118, 118f  
     prosthesis-related, 118–121  
     provisional prosthesis, 118–119  
     surgical, 116–117, 117f  
     wear-related, 120  
**Coronal flaring**, 63

## D

**D1 bone**, 14  
**D2 bone**, 14  
**Definitive prosthesis**  
     adjustments to, 114  
     complications of, 119–120, 119f–120f  
     digital milling of, 159  
     fabrication and delivery of  
         description of, 112–113, 130, 160, 161f  
     framework, 112–113  
         for fully edentulous maxilla, 68, 68f–69f  
         for partially edentulous maxilla, 101

wax try-in, 112  
 final impressions for, 110–112  
 fracture of, 119–120  
 interarch space for, 119  
 nonpassive fit of, 121f  
 passive fit of, 113–114, 120  
 preliminary impressions for, 110–112  
 seating of, 113, 114  
 teeth in, 113  
**Delayed loading of implants**, 13  
**Dental history**, 21, 22f–23f  
**Dental laboratory**, 165, 165b  
**Dental service organization**, 166  
**Dentist**, 164–165  
**Denture**  
     buccal flange of, 58, 58f  
     conventional, 9f  
     duplicate template, 107  
     fixed prosthesis from, 36  
     immediate, 33, 33f, 107–108  
     implant-supported prosthesis conversion of, 107–108  
     intaglio surface of, 107f  
     quality of life affected by, 5  
     removable. See Removable denture.  
**Denture history**, 20–21  
**Digital intraoral scanning**, 127  
**Digital records**, 158f, 159  
**Digital technology**  
     benefits of, 127–128  
     limitations of, 128  
     trends in, 143–144  
**Digital workflow**  
     advantages of, 144, 162  
     benefits of, 127–128, 129b  
     clinical impact of, 162  
     digital data acquisition, 128–129  
     follow-up, 130–131  
     implant surgery, 130  
     intraoral scanners, 156, 156f  
     limitations of, 128, 129b  
     mandibular application of, 131, 137f–143f  
     maxillary application of, 131, 131f–137f  
     postoperative care, 130–131  
     prosthetic rehabilitation, 130  
     steps involved in, 128–131, 130f–143f, 158f–161f, 159–160  
     treatment planning, 128–129, 159  
**Direction indicators**, 46, 46f, 65, 66f, 100f  
**Direct-to-consumer marketing**, 172  
**Distal tilted implants**, 44  
**DSO**. See Dental service organization.  
**DTC marketing**. See Direct-to-consumer marketing.  
**Dynamic navigation**, 125





## E

Edentulism  
 causes of, vi  
 dental function restoration in, vi  
 full. See Fully edentulous mandible; Fully edentulous maxilla.  
 mandibular. See Fully edentulous mandible; Partially edentulous mandible.  
 maxillary. See Fully edentulous maxilla; Partially edentulous maxilla.  
 in older adults, 1  
 partial. See Partially edentulous mandible; Partially edentulous maxilla.  
 Empathy, 168  
 Esthetic complications, 117f, 117–118  
 Esthetics  
 in candidate selection, 21  
 facial features in, 2, 2f  
 patient perceptions regarding, 2  
 Extraoral examination, 22

## F

Facial scanning, 153, 156f, 157  
 FAIR practice  
 branding of, 166–167  
 dedicated phone line, 168  
 empathy, 168  
 information sharing, 168–169  
 marketing of, 172–174, 174b  
 patient experience touchpoints for, 167–168, 168b  
 referrals, 173–174  
 roadmap to success for, 164  
 staffing of, 169–172  
 terminology use in, 169  
 tracking of, 173  
 FAIR protocol  
 advantages of, 5, 6t, 20, 30, 40, 57  
 candidates for, 3, 3f. See also Candidates.  
 complexities of, patient perception of, 2–3  
 complications of. See Complications.  
 costs of, 163  
 description of, vi, 1, 5  
 disadvantages of, 9  
 drawbacks to, 3, 6t  
 esthetic outcomes of, 2  
 evolution of, 5–10, 6t, 7f–10f  
 financial barriers to, 1–2  
 functional outcomes of, 2  
 functionality provided by, 9, 9f  
 mandibular, 7f

motivation for learning, 163  
 principles of, 30b  
 psychosocial barriers to, 1–3  
 revenue from, 163  
 surgery in, 33–35, 34f  
 surgical guidelines, 30  
 tilted implants and. See Tilted implants.  
 FDDBA. See Freeze-dried bone allograft.  
 Fear, 3  
 Fixed prosthesis, denture converted into, 36  
 Fixed prosthodontics, improvements in, 5  
 4D printing, 143  
 Framework, for definitive prosthesis, 113  
 Freeze-dried bone allograft, 78–79, 79f, 85f, 91f  
 Full-arch implant placement, maxillary, 7f–8f  
 Full-arch implant rehabilitation. See FAIR protocol.  
 Fully edentulous mandible  
 denture duplicate template for, 40–41, 41f  
 description of, 40  
 digital workflow application to, 140f–141f  
 guided surgery in, 50f–55f  
 models of, 41  
 preoperative procedure for, 40–41  
 surgical procedure for  
 abutment attachment, 44–47, 46f  
 anesthesia, 42  
 anterior implants, 43–44, 45f  
 flap reflection, 42–43  
 implant placement, 43–44  
 incision design, 42–43, 43f, 50f  
 overview of, 41–42  
 prosthesis placement and attachment, 48, 48f–49f  
 soft tissue measurements, 47  
 tilted implants, 43f, 44  
 tissue reflection, 42–43  
 treatment planning for, 40  
 Fully edentulous maxilla  
 bone augmentation for, 57  
 preoperative procedure for, 57–58  
 surgical procedure for  
 abutment attachment, 66–67  
 anesthesia, 59  
 case study of, 70f–75f  
 definitive prosthesis fabrication and delivery, 68, 68f–69f  
 denture conversion, 67  
 immediate dentures, 58, 59f  
 implant placement, 61–66, 62f–65f  
 incision design, 59f, 59–61  
 osteotomy, 61  
 overview of, 58–59  
 palatal flap, 60, 60f

preparation in, 58  
 provisional prosthesis, 75f  
 straight implants, 65  
 tilted implants, 64f, 64–65  
 time requirements, 58–59  
 tissue reflection, 59–61, 60f  
 timeline for, 57–58

## G

GI-MASK, 36, 37f, 52f–53f, 72f–73f, 107  
 Grammetry, 157f, 157–158  
 Guided surgery  
 advantages of, 125b  
 in fully edentulous mandible, 50f–55f  
 implant placement using, 130

## H

Healing abutments, 148  
 Hex driver, 47, 47f, 86f, 100  
 Hygiene, 109, 118

## I

Immediate denture  
 description of, 33, 33f  
 implant-supported prosthesis conversion of, 107–108  
 Immediate loading, 130  
 Immediate provisionalization, 35–37, 36f–38f  
 Immediately loaded implants  
 prosthesis used for, 15  
 success rates for, 5  
 Implant(s)  
 anchorage of, 14–15  
 angulation of, 14  
 axial placement of, 10, 10f  
 delayed loading of, 13  
 direction indicators for, 46, 46f, 65, 66f  
 failure of, 116  
 in mandible, 33  
 in maxilla, 32  
 mobility of, 14–15  
 osseointegration of, 109, 130  
 outcomes of, factors guiding, 14–15  
 surgical guides in placement of, 125–126  
 teeth extraction before, 149f  
 tilted. See Tilted implants.  
 virtual placement of, 125  
 Implant company, 165–166  
 Implant stability quotient, 14–15  
 Implant-supported prosthesis, 107–108  
 Impressions  
 for definitive prosthesis, 110–112  
 for provisional prosthesis, 108, 110f  
 Inferior alveolar nerve, 31

Information sharing, 168–169  
Interarch space, 59f, 119  
Intraoral examination, 22  
Intraoral scanners, 156, 156f  
Intraoral scans, 153  
ISQ. See Implant stability quotient.

## L

Layered data integration, 153–154, 154f  
Lead call team member, 170–171  
Life expectancy, 9  
Lindemann bone bur, 61, 62f  
Lip line, 24–25, 25f

## M

M-4 configuration, 16, 17f  
Machine learning, 143  
Mandible  
    bone resorption in, 27f  
    digital workflow application to, 131, 137f–143f  
    fully edentulous. See Fully edentulous mandible.  
    implant positioning in, 33  
    partially edentulous. See Partially edentulous mandible.  
Marcaine, 42, 59  
Marius bridge, 14  
Marketing, 172–174  
Master cast  
    final impressions for, 111, 111f  
    verification jig for, 111–112, 112f  
Maxilla  
    bone, anchorage capacity of, 8f  
    bone resorption in, 26f  
    digital workflow application to, 131, 131f–137f  
    edentulous  
        anterior implants for, 32  
        crestal bone ridge of, 30  
    fully. See Fully edentulous maxilla.  
    partial. See Partially edentulous maxilla.  
    tilted implants in restoration of, 15–16, 15f–16f, 30  
    implant positioning in, 30–31, 31f  
Mental nerve, 30  
Midcrestal incision, 60  
Mucoperiosteal flap, 31  
Multiunit abutments, 14f, 33, 36f–37f, 47, 51f, 66, 85f, 108, 160f

## N

Nasopalatine foramen, 31, 32f  
Nasopalatine nerve, 59, 59f

## O

Occlusion  
    balanced articulation in, 15  
    vertical dimension of, 33, 34f, 107, 139f  
Older adults, edentulism in, 1  
Open-tray technique, for impressions, 110  
Orofacial appearance, 2  
Osseointegration, 109, 130  
Osteotomy  
    for tilted implants, 43  
    undersizing of, 44, 61

## P

Pain, 3  
Palatal flap, 60, 60f  
Partially edentulous mandible  
    alveolar bone availability in, 79  
    autogenous blood concentrates in, 80t  
    bone augmentation in, 78  
    denture duplicate template for, 80f, 81, 82f  
    description of, 23, 24f  
    digital workflow application to, 137f  
    extraction sockets in, 78  
    illustration of, 78f  
    preoperative procedure in, 81  
    socket preservation in, 78  
    special considerations for, 79  
    surgical procedure in  
        abutment attachment, 83–86, 85f–86f, 90f  
        anterior implants, 83  
        case study of, 89f–91f  
        implant placement, 81, 83  
        incision design, 81, 82f, 89f  
        osteotomy, 90f  
        prosthesis fabrication and delivery, 86, 87f–88f  
        tilted implants, 81, 85f  
        tissue reflection, 81, 82f  
Partially edentulous maxilla  
    bone augmentation for, 94  
    computed tomography of, 95  
    description of, 23, 24f  
    extraction sockets in, 94, 104  
    illustration of, 94f  
    preoperative procedure for, 95  
    socket preservation in, 94–95  
    surgical procedure in  
        abutment attachment, 100, 100f  
        anesthesia, 96–97  
        burs used in, 97  
        case study of, 101f–104f  
        definitive prosthesis fabrication and placement, 101

denture conversion, 100–101  
denture duplicate template, 101f  
direction indicators, 100, 100f  
immediate denture, 96  
implant placement, 97–100, 99f  
incision design, 97, 98f  
osteotomy, 97  
overview of, 95–97  
threaded implants, 97  
tilted distal implants, 99–100  
tissue reflection, 97, 98f–99f  
Patient education and engagement, 144  
Peri-implantitis, 44, 83, 99, 117, 117f  
Periodontal disease, vi  
Photogrammetry  
    advantages of, 145–146  
    commercial systems, 146t  
    definition of, 145  
    description of, 157  
    FAIR application of, 146–152, 147f–151f  
    limitations of, 145–146  
    markers, 147, 147f, 150f  
    soft tissue scanning, 148–149, 149f–150f  
Photographic series, 158f  
Platelet-rich plasma, 64, 64f, 79, 80t, 91f, 99  
Polymethyl methacrylate, 15, 41, 57, 95, 135f–136f  
Posterior tilted implants  
    description of, 1, 1f  
    distal tilting of, 15f  
Primary stability, 14  
Prosthetic protocols  
    biomechanical factors, 106  
    definitive prosthesis. See Definitive prosthesis.  
    description of, 106  
    provisional prosthesis. See Provisional prosthesis.  
Prototypes, 155, 159  
Provisional prosthesis  
    CAD design of, 129  
    complications of, 118–119  
    delivery of, 108–109  
    denture conversion to implant-supported prosthesis, 107–108  
    fabrication of, 107  
    final impressions, 108  
    hygiene for, 109  
Provisionalization, immediate, 35–37, 36f–38f  
PRP. See Platelet-rich plasma.  
Pterygoid implants, 16

## R

Radiographic analysis, 22–23  
Referrals, 173–174  
Remote consultations, 143



Removable dentures  
 advantages of, 6t  
 disadvantages of, 6t  
 removable overdenture versus, 9f  
 Removable overdenture, 6, 9, 10f  
 Resonance frequency analysis, 15  
 Retromolar pads, 47  
 RFA. See Resonance frequency analysis.  
 Ridge-contouring burs, 34, 35f

## S

Screw loosening or fracture, 119, 119f, 121  
 Screw-retained prosthesis, 101  
 Scripts, 169–170  
 Sheffield technique, 113  
 Simple screw test, 113  
 Sinus membrane, 61, 97  
 Smile Artist Approach, 155f, 155–156  
 Smile line, 24–25, 25f, 117f  
 Staffing, 169–172  
 Stereolithographic model, 57  
 STL model. See Stereolithographic model.  
 Straight abutments, 66  
 Surgical guides  
   CBCT fabrication of, 124–126  
   description of, 33, 164  
   fabrication of, 124–126, 129–130

## T

Telemedicine, 143  
 3D avatar patient, 154f, 154–155  
 3D facial scans, 154, 156f, 157  
 3D printing, 125, 143, 158, 158f

Tilted implants  
   abutments for, 16  
   advantages of, 10, 10f, 13  
   angulation of, 14–16, 17f  
   apex of, 15  
   cantilever length of, 13, 13f  
   distal, 44, 64f  
   in edentulous maxilla, 15–16, 15f–16f, 30  
 FAIR procedures and, 14  
   in fully edentulous mandible, 43f, 44  
   in fully edentulous maxilla, 64f, 64–65  
   history of, 13–17  
   illustration of, 1f  
 M-4 configuration of, 16, 17f  
   osteotomies for, 43  
   in partially edentulous mandible, 81, 85f  
   in partially edentulous maxilla, 99–100  
   position of, 16, 17f  
   posterior, 1, 1f  
   primary stability of, 14  
   protocol for, 13  
   pterygoid implants, 16  
   tilt amount for, 35  
   types of, 15–16  
   V-4 configuration of, 16, 17f  
   zygomatic implants, 16  
 Titanium sleeves, 36–37, 36f–37f, 48f, 52f, 54f,  
   100, 140f  
 Tooth decay, vi  
 Tooth loss  
   causes of, vi  
   factors associated with, 1  
 Transition line, 25f  
 Treatment coordinator, 171–172

Treatment planning  
   bone density, 25–28  
   bone volume, 25–28, 26f–27f  
   case classification, 23, 24f  
   measurements in  
     distance to bone, 23–24  
     lip line, 24–25, 25f  
     smile line, 24–25, 25f  
   model evaluation, 28  
   questions for, 21b  
 Trough, 35, 35f

## U

Unique selling position, 166–167

## V

V-4 configuration, 16, 17f  
 Verification jig, 111–112, 112f–113f  
 Vertical dimension of occlusion, 33, 34f,  
   107, 139f  
 Virtual reality, 143

## W

Wax try-in, 33  
 Wear-related complications, 120

## Z

Zygomatic implants  
   placement of, 6, 8f  
   as tilted implants, 16